

CODIB-D-32  
3 April 1959

UNITED STATES INTELLIGENCE BOARD  
COMMITTEE ON DOCUMENTATION

Cataloging and Classifying Books  
in the CIA Library

1. Present practice in CIA is to use the Intelligence Subject Code (ISC) and the Army Map Service Area Code in cataloging and classifying books for the CIA Library.

2. The ISC is under revision and will continue to be used for CIA documents. Extending the use of the new ISC to books would entail a recataloging exercise. Because recataloging is inevitable we want to make the best change possible. Query: Insofar as books are concerned, whether to change to the revised ISC or to another system, such as the Library of Congress or the Dewey Decimal systems.

3. CODIB-D-26 sets forth principles and criteria designed to provide guidance in the development of compatible intelligence referencing systems. This document has relevance for the book collection of the CIA Library, inasmuch as it is a part of the information holdings of the intelligence community.

4. CIA has studied the problem to determine whether it is more important to CIA and the community to adopt a system identical with that to be used for intelligence documents (which the revised ISC will be designed to do), or to adopt a system compatible with the prevailing practice for classifying books in the libraries of the USIB member organizations and other cooperating libraries such as the Library of Congress (see attachment).

5. CIA has tentatively concluded that the overall interests are best served by adopting the Library of Congress system of cataloging and classifying books. The choice of an additional area coding system has been deferred pending further action within the community on the adoption of an area code.

6. The main factors influencing this choice are:

- a. Most of the people in the Agency have been brought up in research environments which use the LC or a similar system. They have indicated by minimum use and criticism

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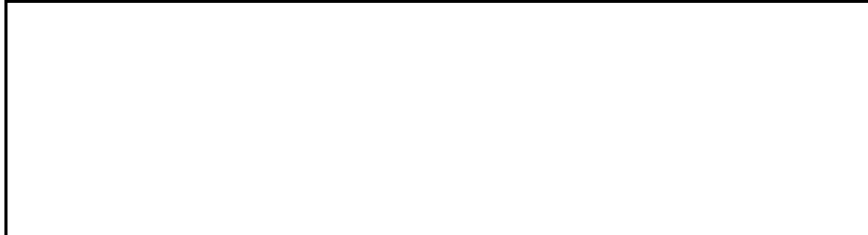
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that our present catalog is not easily understandable to them. Conversion to LC would provide familiar ground.

- b. Libraries with which we do the most business use the LC or a similar system. Compatibility is thus achieved - a desirable end in itself. This would reduce existing barriers within the community and make way for joint undertakings such as cooperative cataloging.
- c. There is a trend in the book trade to do cataloging at the source, i.e., LC does the cataloging before the book is published and the catalog card is published as part of the book. The LC and Dewey classification numbers are included in each case.

d.



- e. Clear text subject and phrase cross-referencing will be possible under the LC system without requiring the user to resort to a glossary for translation from subject to subject through a parametric code.

Action:

7. This matter will be placed upon the agenda of the next CODIB meeting pursuant to para. 17 of CODIB-D-26, 25 February 1959.

Paul A. Borel  
Chairman

Attachment

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